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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ In meeting with Special Representative Khan, RPF says it will likely declare unilateral cease-fire within 24 hours; to announce broad-based transitional government next week.

+ WFP and UNICEF launch emergency airlifts as Rwandan refugees continue exodus into Zaire; 12,000 refugees arrive hourly in Goma.

+ Secretary-General says if Security Council decides Western Sahara referendum will fulfil settlement plan, he will recommend transitional period start on 1 October and vote be held on 14 February 1995.

+ Secretary-General welcomes announcement of 25 July meeting between King of Jordan and Prime Minister of Israel.

+ Secretary-General appoints Denis Halliday, Irish national, as Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management; Benon Sevan, Cypriot national, named Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services.

+ General Assembly, adopting four resolutions and two decisions approved by Fifth Committee, asks Secretary-General to clarify terms of service for special representatives and envoys.

+ Representatives from Europe and North America to meet in Vienna in October to prepare for 1995 World Conference on Women.

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The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) today said it would probably declare a unilateral cease-fire within 24 hours, according to a United Nations spokesman. During a meeting with Special Representative Shahryar Khan, General Paul Kagame said the RPF would also announce a broad-based transitional government next week, most likely headed by Prime Minister designate Faustin Twagiramungu.

(more)

The RPF said it was encouraging all civilians to return to their homes. Military personnel could also return without fear of reprisals, but those guilty of criminal acts would be tried eventually. However, the RPF pledged that it would cooperate fully with the Commission of Experts soon to be established by the Secretary-General to investigate war crimes and genocide in Rwanda.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today launched emergency airlifts to aid Rwandan refugees fleeing into Zaire. Some 12,000 refugees were arriving at Goma each hour, while hundreds of thousands more were reported to be heading towards the border from Ruhengeri. WFP said there was no shelter, no medicines or adequate supplies of food and water in the Goma area.

"To avert a major humanitarian catastrophe, additional donor assistance is needed", said WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini. "We urgently require trucks and funds to airlift food supplies to the refugees and internally displaced people in Rwanda, as well as cash to buy food commodities in the region and to ensure quick delivery."

"We are facing a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions as hundreds of thousands of Rwandese -- most of them children and infants -- flee from temporary homes to pour across the border into eastern Zaire", said Fritz Lherisson of UNICEF. He called on the international community to treat the situation as an emergency of the highest order.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said he will recommend that the transitional period in Western Sahara start on 1 October, and a vote be held on 14 February 1995, if the Security Council decides that the referendum should be held to fulfil the settlement plan. In a report dated 12 July, he noted that the Identification Commission of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) had set 31 August as the deadline for voter applications. It had already collected 75,000 forms, of which 20,000 had been processed. Further delays in launching the operation would result in a considerable loss of resources as arrangements had been made to enable the Commission to start identifying and registering potential voters.

The Secretary-General reported on the difficulty regarding the participation of Organization of African Unity (OAU) observers in the referendum. He said he would make every effort to ensure that they arrived as soon as possible so that the Identification Commission could start registering potential voters. The interview process would be complicated and time-consuming as it would involve a tribal, nomadic society. The Commission would require at least 40 teams of three to four observers to be able to complete its tasks in November.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today welcomed the announcement that King Hussein of Jordan and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel would meet in Washington, D.C., on 25 July, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General expressed the hope that the meeting and its outcome would serve to accelerate the peace process in the Middle East.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today appointed Denis Halliday, an Irish national, as Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management in the Department of Administration and Management. The Secretary-General also appointed Benon Sevan, a national of Cyprus, as Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services in the same Department. Mr. Halliday and Mr. Sevan will both report to Under-Secretary-General Joseph Connor.

Prior to his new appointment, Mr. Halliday was Regional Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system in Thailand. From 1989 to 1993, he was Director of the Division of Personnel in the UNDP.

Last March, Mr. Sevan was given the responsibility of coordinating the preparation of a number of reports on restructuring and related issues requested by the General Assembly. He previously served as Assistant Secretary-General in the Department of Political Affairs, with particular responsibility for General Assembly and Security Council Affairs.

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Acting without a vote, the General Assembly yesterday adopted four draft resolutions and two draft decisions contained in a report of the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary). The Assembly asked the Secretary-General to clarify the terms of service for his special representatives and envoys; to prepare a draft programme budget section on the economic situation, recovery and development of Africa; and to redeploy posts and resources from the Department of Development Support and Management Services to the five regional economic commissions.

The Assembly also approved the establishment of a European hub for the United Nations telecommunications system; decided to take no action on the Secretary-General's proposal to formalize the provisional redeployment of an Assistant Secretary-General post from the Department of Administration and Management to the Office of Inspection and Investigations; and asked the Board of Auditors to audit the Integrated Management and Information System (IMIS).

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The impact of economic and social changes in Europe on women and improving women's participation in decision-making are among the issues to be addressed when representatives from Europe and North America meet in Vienna from 17 to 21 October to prepare for next year's World Conference on Women.

The meeting is being organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in cooperation with national committees, United Nations agencies, European institutions and non-governmental organizations working on women's issues. The ECE region consists of 54 countries in North America and Europe, including the Commonwealth of Independent States and Israel.

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